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How to Grow Good Melons

The South is the natural home of the watermelon and every one wants to grow them to perfection. There is nothing that takes the place of a good, large, sweet, juicy watermelon on a hot summer's day and our special strains of Southern-grown melon seed should be planted in every garden where something especially good is wanted.

Melons do best in rich, sandy loam soil but where this is not obtainable they can be grown on light, clay soils or warm, sunny hillsides. The best fertilizer is well-rotted stable manure although commercial fertilizer can be used to advantage where manure is not obtainable. Hills should be 8 to 10 feet apart each way and 8 to 10 seeds planted in each hill, thinning out afterwards to 2 or 3 after the rough leaves have formed. Watermelons do not root very deeply but they do spread. In applying fertilizer spread it to a considerable distance, say 2 feet out from the center of each hill as it is well to encourage this natural tendency of the roots to spread. Where it is necessary to use commercial fertilizer use one as nearly like the following formula if possible: Nitrogen 3 per cent, potash 8 per cent, available phosphoric acid 8 per cent. This formula has given best of results on melon lands. Use from two to three pounds of the above formula to each hill, working it and mixing it thoroughly with the soil some ten days or two weeks before the seed is planted. First plantings can be made as soon as the soil gets warm in the spring; succession plantings can be made up to June in this latitude. Cultivate lightly until the runners come well out into the middles. If large weeds come, cut them off; do not pull them up as this disturbs the roots and vines. Vines after they begin to run should never be moved or disturbed as it always injures the crop. When there are plenty of blooms on the plants pinch off the ends of the runners. When extra large melons are desired leave only one plant to each hill and only one or two melons to each vine. It is useless to try to grow good melons in the South from any seed except carefully selected Southern grown seed. In home garden plantings, delayed until the ground is warm, one ounce of seed will usually plant 25 to 30 hills or at the rate of one pound per acre. In the extra early plantings for shipping crops it is advisable to use at least 2 pounds per acre to insure a stand in the rather cool ground. Melons require about 120 days to mature. Write for prices.

Girardeau Seed Company

Monticello, Florida

